

TULARE COUNTY WATER COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
June 9, 2014

Members Present:

Allen Ishida, Board Representative and Chairman
Mike Ennis, Board Alternate Representative
Mark Larsen, District 3 Appointee
Chris Kapheim, District 4 Appointee
Richard L. Schafer, District 5 Appointee
Dennis Keller, At-Large Appointee
Dale Brogan, District 2 Appointee
Susana De Anda, At-Large Appointee
Roger Everett, At-Large Appointee

Members Absent:

Rudy Mendoza, TCAG Representative
Paul Boyer, District 1 Appointee

Staff Present:

Julieta Martinez, Tulare County Board of Supervisors
Denise Akins, County Administrative Office
Barbara Grunwald, County Counsel

Members of the Public who voluntarily provided their names on the attendance sheet:

Carole Clum
Pat Pinkham
Steve Stadler
Michael Tharp
Michael Hickey
Richard Garcia
Jessi Snyder
Cynthia Echavarria

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:02pm.

2. Public Comment Period

Carol Clum of Three Rivers provided the Commissioners with two handouts. See attachment for comments.

3. Approval of Minutes from May 12, 2014 meeting

Motion made by Commissioner Kapheim, second by Commissioner Schafer. Motion approved.
Commissioner de Anda and Commissioner Everett abstain.

4. Discussion on the CA Water Bond

Chairman Ishida stated that the San Joaquin Valley Counties and Delta Counties sent out a letter over a month and a half ago to persuade Counties to stand together on a position over the Water Bond and certain allocations. The legislature is looking at a one billion dollar incentive for watershed restoration. The Counties have earmarked 600 million, 200 million for the sierras, 200 million for the coast, and 200 million for southern California (south of Kern County). The last legislation that he have looked at changed water shed restoration to water shed protection which he states is a big difference in terms. The earmarks that were set aside for watershed protection, the bulk of it was in southern California and there was 50 million dollars for the Sierras which is the biggest water shed in the state. It was not a very equitable division of that money. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Schafer obtained from ACWA a copy of the matrix of the water bond bills that are provided in the legislature. He provided copies to the Commission. In speaking with the lobbyist at ACWA, he understood that they are very active right now in trying to finalize a water bond bill. The lobbyist for the Valley Ag Water Coalition has indicated that the administration of Governor Brown has not become engaged and he may be wanting to move it to November of 2016. He believes the legislature is trying to develop an acceptable piece of legislation. It is the understanding that June 26th is the date for placing a new water bond on the November ballot. He was also told the date can be maneuvered out to the end of August

5. Discussion on Assembly Bill 1739 (Dickinson)

Commissioner Kapheim shared that the bill has gone to legislative council and will be out in the following week. They are working on policy because Friday was the deadline. He stated that AB 1739 and SB 1168 were both in Sacramento last week. Both authors are going to work together and carry pieces of the bills to meet the objectives for ground water management.

Commissioner Schafer provided a copy of a statement made by the President of the California Farm Bureau Federation, Paul Winter. He believes it is well stated and we should do everything we can to oppose groundwater legislation. He does not believe that the bill is in the best interest of the farming community. Although the language is currently leading toward local control and toward a meter on every ground water well, the local agency in charge of ground water management plan's authority would be to accumulate data to determine who is pumping what from each field. That moves directly toward control and it hasn't been a procedure that is acceptable to the farming community.

Chairman Ishida stated that the Board of Supervisors was in Sacramento a few weeks ago and one question raised was who local control was. It seemed like it is being done by water shed instead of County jurisdictions.

Commissioner Kapheim shared that it allows for both.

6. Update on Tulare Lake Basin Disadvantage Community Water Study

Commissioner De Anda stated that they are towards the end of the final studies for this project. The next SOAC meeting will be on June 23rd at the County Administrative Office from 4:30 to 6:30pm. She highlighted that all of the pilots are being wrapped up. She encouraged everyone to go onto the website and provide feedback on the final recommendations. The final report and final SOAC meeting will be held August 11th from 4:30 to 6:30 pm at the County Administrative Office.

7. Subcommittee Reports

None at this time.

8. Staff Reports

None at this time.

9. Commissioners Comments

Commissioner De Anda brought forward comments from Commissioner Boyer who was at another meeting. He asked that the Water Commission encourage the Board of Supervisors to apply for funding through a Cal Homes grant fund that would actually allow and help private home owners with their wells going dry. The deadline is coming up. Commissioner De Anda was trying to research if there is an income restriction. There may be for low income. The County would apply for this as grant and homeowners would apply for this as a loan.

Commissioner De Anda reviewed last meetings minutes and asked about the Drought Task Force meeting and how a person can participate.

Chairman Ishida stated that there was a meeting today put on by the Tulare County Office of Emergency Services. Different agencies meet to discuss the drought. The meeting today was in Farmersville. Discussion followed.

10. Next meeting – Monday, July 14, 2014, 3:00 p.m. – Board of Supervisors Chambers

11. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:41pm.